Introduction.
Amerindian Visual Manifestations and Practices

Sanja Savkić
Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut, Firenze, Italia
sanja.savkic@khi.fi.it

Scholars from different fields of study were invited to present their research on the visual cultures and aesthetic practices of indigenous peoples from the Americas, covering a vast span of time: from the ancient to the present. The result is this book, which brings together fifteen essays in three different languages (Spanish, English and Portuguese), grouped in four sections: 1) Cosmologies and visual histories of power: to name and to show; 2) Perceptions and creative interventions in urban spaces; 3) (Re)presentations of the invisible: the status of images; and 4) The encounters of past and present: mobile memories. The many theoretical and methodological approaches concerning the study of the different productions and practices in the field of visuality among multiple past and present Amerindian groups are brought to the fore through specific case analyses. The aims of this collection of essays are: to promote an interdisciplinary dialogue by bringing together different areas of knowledge and inquiry regarding the specificities of indigenous visuality in the Americas in its historical dimension; to rethink some 'old' problems and offer some 'new' directions, encouraging and enriching the generation of knowledge in the humanities and social sciences; and to insert its effects in the framework of the studies of the visual throughout the world. This volume's size restrictions leave several archaeological/cultural areas unaddressed, which should be dealt with in future publications.

In using the word 'indigenous' it is not our intention to generalize the enormous cultural diversity of the peoples that have lived and continue to live in the Americas, which constitutes a veritable kaleidoscope in terms of its various productions and practices.[1]

Following Tripura (2018, 43), at an international level, currently the notion of 'indigenous peoples' is meant to serve two main objectives: a) to replace various pejorative terms used in the past to refer to the communities that were placed under the

1 It is important to specify that this paper does not seek to problematize the word 'indigenous', which can be the subject of another publication. The following words are also used, in addition to indigenous: original, autochthonous, native, aboriginal, natural, gentile, Indian. These, nevertheless, are not absolute synonyms, given that their meaning may vary in time (for example, 'natural' and 'gentile' are more present in Colonial written sources from New Spain than today), in space (in the anglophone and francophone Americas, the designations First Nations and Native Americans are more widely used), or in terms of their connotations (see note 2).

new designation;[2] b) to promote and protect various rights denied to these peoples for centuries within the colonial states and the colonialist projects in different parts of the world. Since the general category of 'indigenous peoples' includes several societies with different histories, it is not possible to speak about their 'culture' as a single concept. Even within a single ethnic group with strong historical continuities – e.g. the Maya – we cannot speak of a homogeneous culture across space and time. Nevertheless, at a certain level it is possible to speak about 'indigenous culture' in the singular because, having undergone similar historical trajectories, practically all indigenous groups embrace a set of fundamental cultural ideals including, for example, cosmologies that privilege the stewardship and protection of the natural environment as opposed to its unrestricted domination and exploitation, as well as the bestowing of agency to the various beings that constitute the cosmos. Similarly, the Amerindian communities maintain a complex relation with modern national states, which have been organized following European political, economic, cultural and religious models. Thus, in the term's strictest sense, 'indigenous' makes reference to native groups whose own practices are distinct from those of European culture, which are exogenous in nature.[3] Therefore, the designation 'indigenous' here is intended to show what is particular to the productions and practices examined in this book and, with it, how enriching they are to the field of visuality in the world; what is not sought is exoticization and isolation.

That said, 'indigenous' in this volume refers just as much to the communities as to their languages, productions and practices of various kinds that were already present on the American continent before the arrival of the Europeans (pre-Columbian period). It also includes those manifestations made by peoples who survived the expansion of Western civilization after the contact between two worlds at the closing of the fifteenth century, beyond the phenomenon of miscegenation (*mestizaje* in Spanish) and the complexities resulting from the new realities after colonization (Colonial period or Early Modern period [within the framework of a global chronology]). Likewise, it comprises groups from recent times (Modern and Contemporary periods) belonging to organizational traditions other than the modern state, as well as individuals in whose productions underlie the ideas of ancestral knowledge and attitude. As Julie Nagam rightly argues in this volume, "[w]e are not stuck in the archaic past, nor are we out of time. Instead, we are constantly moving throughout time and space with the knowledge

2 In the Americas, the word 'Indian' (*indio* in Spanish) is the one that has been the most ambiguous: it was the word used by the Spanish to refer to the natives of the Caribbean islands, because it was believed that after Cristopher Columbus a way had been found to reach India, in Asia. Later on, these lands came to be called the West Indies in order to differentiate the New World *India* from the Asian one. Additionally, in some Spanish-speaking countries of the Americas the word *indio* has been used in a pejorative sense, reason for which preference has been given to the use of unambiguous terms, such as American indigenous (or indigenous from the Americas, or from America) or Amerindian.

3 'European culture' should not be understood either as a homogenous entity, for only a few European countries were involved in the colonization of various parts of the world and not 'Europe' as an undifferentiated or uniform continent.

of the land and the stories we hold." Similarly, contemporary indigenous art synthesizes new relationships within past and present modes of native and colonial forms of experience, participation and spectatorship. Thus, the Indigenous offers 'an additional way of being' for Aboriginal, Native or First Nations peoples, or 'a new mode of being Native'. Whether it stands between colonial and native, between past and present or between local and international, Indigeneity is a site of contention and agency.

Speaking of 'visual culture' raises the question of the concept of image and its functioning. In recent years, Aby Warburg's theoretical proposals (2000; 2004; 2005), which comprehend the image not as a closed field of knowledge but as a moving reality, have regained force. A true precursor of interdisciplinary studies and opposed to the theoretical rigidity of positivism, Warburg made use of other fields of knowledge such as philosophy, ethnology, medicine, biology and psychology, in order to rethink the questions originally put forward by art history and to reorganize its body of thought, as well as to open it to new fields (McPhail Fanger 2012, 167-168). The concept of 'aesthetic practices' joins this idea (and further develops it); it has been recently introduced by the "Art Histories and Aesthetic Practices" research program and inserted within the perspectives and contours of a plural history of art and artistic practices[4] (see Hannah Baader's "Epilogue", this volume).

For Warburg, the constitution of images goes beyond merely aesthetic intentions, as it is based on an intricate psychological process that points to the anthropological explanation of the image as a cultural-biological function of humankind. This point of view is largely due to his study of religion and myth, which surpassed the 'conventional' paths of the art history of his time. His stay among the Hopi indigenous people in Arizona at the closing of the nineteenth century was especially fecund for opening new paths in the field of the study of images. Warburg's encounter with the Amerindian universe was to be a key moment in the birth of a new discipline: Image Science (*Bildwissenschaft*), which brings together the history and the anthropology of art/image. According to Els Lagrou (this volume), the minimalistic and chimerical representation of the Hopi snake-lightning, in combination with its ritual manipulation, gave Warburg his key insight to think about the image as a conceptual operation, according to which the

4 The concept of 'aesthetic practices' deals with the study of artifacts and their contexts and the social and cultural dynamics around them, as well as the processes of transfer and transformation in a transcultural, postcolonial and global perspective. This includes the dynamics of production and perception of things, images and architectures from the time of their creation to their subsequent apprehensions up to the present. What is being proposed, therefore, is to research artifacts with reference to their biographies, including also their acquisition, display, storage, oppression, reworking or destruction, and to engage with sociological, genderspecific, historical, legal, religious, technical, philological, linguistic, geographical, ecological and scientific aspects of aesthetic practices. This concept allows to understand artifacts as actors or participants in specific social and cultural dynamics.
"Art Histories and Aesthetic Practices" is a research program within the framework of the Berlin-based Transregional Studies Forum (Forum Transregionale Studien), initiated by the Max Planck Institute of Art History in Florence (Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut): https://www.art-histories.de/en/the-research-program.html (16.07.2019).

image does not imitate what is seen, but rather interprets it. Similarly, this approach is interested in the study of image processuality – the way in which 'indigenous' images are conceived, generated and transmitted – the human body being both producer and receiver of images, a living medium for image (Carreón Blaine 2014, 247; referring to Belting's *An Anthropology of Images: Picture, Medium, Body* [2011]).

In the academic sphere, visual culture has recently sought to encompass cultural studies, art history, critical theory, philosophy and anthropology, focusing on the aspects of culture that are based on visual elements, i.e. images and their relation with their audience.[5] Following Hernández (2005, 9-34), visual culture as a concept and as a field of study offers a series of theoretical and methodological frameworks for rethinking the role of past and present visual representations, as well as the visualizing positions of subjects. This field is thought to be constituted by two intimate elements: a) cultural forms linked to the gaze, known as 'visuality' practices; b) the study of a broad spectrum of visual 'artifacts' that go beyond those that have been collected and exhibited in art institutions. Visual culture has a changing and provisional status, given the constant formation and reformulation of visual media and their uses and appropriations, as well as the different conceptions regarding images and objects coming from non-European cultures. This vast panorama, which explores visual culture (from a historical perspective that goes beyond a mere catalogue interest), is also open to exploring how the history of visual culture is linked to the creation of identities and gazes of reality.

Visual artifacts are historically, socially and politically determined and cannot be studied in isolation from other factors, since they exist in connection with other productions and demand the use of senses other than the sense of sight, such as sound, tact, smell, but also language and gesture, and, therefore, cannot be considered without taking into account these modes of signification. The historical problem of vision is different from a history of representational artifacts, which means that sight cannot be separated from historical questions in the process of building subjectivity. What today constitutes the domain of the visual is the result of all kinds of forces and power relations and not a mere perceptual fact. The concept of visuality, concomitant to the notion of the social (in contrast with what would be a scientific study of sight), questions the idea of universality and progress in the art of seeing, given that visuality is – beyond anything else – a phenomenon related to "local knowledge" (Hernández 2005, 19). From this perspective, in this volume we examine those visual cultures that are foreign to the European model, from different periods and places, their standards of seeing and looking – in this specific case, the indigenous visual cultures of the Americas – seeking a change of values and attitudes regarding visuality, textuality, identity and corporality.

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5 Among the theoretical and methodological proposals that deal with images within this approach (which have had noticeable effects for formulating the field of Visual Studies) are Belting's (2007; 2011), Boehm's (1994), Bredekamp's (2003), Elkins' (1999), Mitchell's (2005), as well as Holley and Moxey's (2002), and Mirzoeff's (1999), to name only a few authors.

It is an experience that draws from the image (as visuality), i.e. as the experience of a history that must first become visible, and is then opened to other senses of apperception, as *aesthesis*. In other words, visuality is also understood as an access and an 'invitation' to apprehend non-visible realities (or forces), those absent, veiled or barely suggested that exist as mental images that may become present. This is especially important in connection with ritual images/objects. They may be materialized and, through this, become accessible to sight/gaze by means of practices involving those who take part both in their production and in their reception. These practices respond to specific cosmo-visions and ways of existing in the world. Thus, on the one hand, the sense of sight is a primary means of access to the world, which is then joined by other senses (constituting a multisensorial experience), as was mentioned above, where the strategies of relation, dialogue and negotiation with the environment, with the ('art')work and with one's own body become important. For example, there are taboos concerning the visibility of certain ritual objects: there are objects that are hidden from view and others that can be seen only on special occasions or under specific conditions; thus, images are actors that take part in ceremonies, but many times in the absence of humans, as argued by Neurath (2013, 59-60).

In Amerindian thought, these 'works' are not simply 'lifeless things', as at the same time they both represent and become present; i.e., they possess vital force, foremost in ritual contexts (see this volume's third section). The study of ritual art has become a strategic field for the new transdisciplinary practices, because it is there where it is especially evident that images are never 'simply' images. Ritual objects not only 'represent', but have a tendency to 'present' powerful beings; that is, the artistic creation, aside from producing figurations that can often be read from a symbolic plane, engenders creatures with their own life and will. Gell (1998) and Severi (2008; 2009) have argued that these 'living images' or 'more-than-images' can be distinguished by the power that emanates from them; i.e., they possess agency and even have a subjectivity of their own. In consonance with Carreón Blaine (2014, 254), "images [are] capable of action".

At the same time, the intrinsic features of the plastic images themselves do not define their status, but have relevance in relation to the experience of them in the specific contexts of their emplacement, use or circulation. Following the arguments set forth by María Alba Bovisio (this volume), in *unancha*-type images, the visibility variable is substantial both in relation to their morphology and placement, given that the representational function has precisely the task of making an absence visible by means of the icon. There is a possibility that in Andean sacred images, the bidimensional ones may function as representations, i.e., *unancha*, given their illusionistic and fictional character: in two dimensions allusion is made to three-dimensional bodies, while sculptural pieces in the round serve as *wakas*, since they occupy the same space as the spectator with which they share three-dimensionality. Therefore, the character of visual manifestations in terms of 'presence' would demand three-dimensionality (which does not mean that every sculpture in the round is a *waka*, a condition that is constituted in praxis).

The fundamental difference between many indigenous concepts regarding sculpture and painting and the Western/European conception is that "the main function of the image was not to represent the things of the world and divine entities, but rather to present them" (Carreón Blaine 2014, 249). That is, the image does not imitate the forms of Nature but rather, in principle, makes an absence visible through forms, understood these in a broad sense. Following Escobar (2004, 141), "the concept of representation [...] promises to present an idea or an object that is irretrievably absent". This is the reason why it does not account for other types of plastic images or figurations that, on the contrary, do not present an object or an absent being, but are constituted in it, as one of its possible modes of existence. The 'representation' (assimilated to the iconic sign) is ontologically distinct from the reality it evokes, while 'presentification'[6] participates in the same ontological status.

In addition, it is convenient to consider some Amerindian image concepts, which imply a set of ideas that are rarely addressed in studies of the visual outside this area, in spite of their profuse historical-visual heritage, namely *b'aah*, *ixiptla*, *nierika*, or *kene*, *demi* and *yuxin* (see Lagrou, this volume). The notion of *b'aah* is known to us from Maya hieroglyphic inscriptions from the Classic period (292-909 AD). Velásquez García (2009, 523-569) understands it as an animated entity alluding to the meanings of 'head, body and being' and, in turn, extending to the whole body, with the optional meaning of 'being' or 'person'.[7] This concept is also related to the phrases indicating accession to power, decapitation, the meaning of 'first', linked with the idea of hierarchical authority, where the head is used as a means of exaltation. Further, it has to do with the notion of kinship, in the sense that children are a reflection or bodily extension of the parent's essence. Related to this are the portraits of rulers, either painted or sculpted, which were among their most prized possessions. The verb *b'aahaj*, 'to become image' is linked to this; *b'aahis* alludes to portraiture as a graphic extension of the body, while *ub'aah* translates as 'it is his/her body' or 'it is his/her being', as well as 'it is the image/body of…' or 'it is the being of the ancestor…'. In other words, the being of portrayed characters becomes frozen in time through sculpture and painting, arts that constituted a durable extension of personal identity in spaces that transcend the body's biological limitations; it also implies that for the Maya the images do not represent a model, but identify with it (Velásquez García 2009, 533). This is an indication that between visual productions and different entities (deities, essences/forces, ancestors) there was no clear-cut separation and that they possessed ontological characteristics: the ancient artist conferred vitality or will to the images/objects intended for ceremonial purposes, creating them through rituals.

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6 María Alba Bovisio (this volume) uses the word 'presentification' (*presentificación* in Spanish) as the concept opposed to 'representation' in order to ponder on the type of image which 'presents' rather than 'represents' the things from the world. See also Els Lagrou (this volume).

7 See also Houston and Stuart (1998).

Following Carreón Blaine (2014, 247-274), the word *ixiptla* comes from Nahuatl and is among the most used pre-Columbian indigenous concepts to address the subject of the image. The idea that underlies the understanding of *ixiptla* is that of 'presenting' the things of the world and divine entities, and not just of 'representing' them. The 'conflict' between Mesoamerican and European traditions concerning the image gave rise to the need to understand native images and differentiate them from Western ones. Beginning with Hvidtfeldt's study (1958), there are two interpretations of the meaning of this word. One of them maintains that its root is *xip*, which refers to 'skin, covering, bark, wrap'; it alludes to the idea that 'the receiving wrap' or 'the skin that covered' a divine shape was the receptacle of power, the recognizable presence of a force imbued in an object; in this sense, human beings are also *ixiptla* as 'impersonators' of a god, acting as a cover in ritual context (López Austin 1973; Gruzinski 1994). Nonetheless, an *ixiptla* was not necessarily human; only human beings with the features of gods were *ixiptla*, just like the gods' statues, the anthropomorphic figurines and the effigies of deities made of different materials, and so were their painted manifestations; i.e, physically *ixiptla* can be a number of things, so the term must be understood as image and object, and as image and person (Clendinnen 1991). Another possible meaning of *ixiptla* is linked with the root *ixtli* that is associated with 'face' (Hvidtfeldt 1958), which corresponds to the notion of *b'aah* among the Classic Maya, as was mentioned above, as well as to the *nierika* of the contemporary Huichol, as will be seen below. It is possible that the understanding of *ixiptla* both in the sense of 'bark/skin' and in that of 'face/head' are not far apart and are actually transferrable to that of person, image, representation, and the same would go for *b'aah* and *nierika*.

To fully understand the complex concept *ixiptla*, aside from the aspect of what is apparent, both the material dimension and production of images must be taken into account: the very act of making images transfers power and sacredness, since the sacred is conjured by their creation. The *ixiptla* is the set of elements that constitute the image, made up of the attributes corresponding to each divinity, when a sacred force is invoked and summoned by means of creating the material medium that contains the divine essence. The physical form, attire, accoutrements and all the elements that make up the *ixiptla*, as well as the rituals of its making and its very shaping led to its consolidation. Given that its meaning is not static, the word *ixiptla* does not always correspond to the notion of the sacred. Uses of the term point to the existence of something or someone represented or to that which the very image represents. That is, the word *ixiptla* should not be translated as 'the image', but rather as 'the image of…', not as 'the representation', but as 'the representation of…', 'his/her *ixiptla*', 'the *ixiptla* of…'; in other words, it is incorrect to use the word *ixiptla* without a referent as Carreón Blaine (2014, 267) shows. In this sense, its use is parallel to the one of *ub'aah* in Maya hieroglyphic inscriptions, where the image belongs to someone, as indicated by the prefix *u-* ('his/her').

At the same time, in his study of contemporary Huichol art, Neurath (2013, 37) ponders on one of the most important concepts of this art – *nierika* (*nierikate* in the plural):

> The word comes from the verb *niereya*, 'to see'. Its first meaning corresponds to the cheek and face, although it is also used as 'portrait', 'drawing', 'photograph' and 'work of art'. The well-known yarn boards are also called this way. It could be said that the *nierika* category encompasses many of the objects that are put in an offering, not only strict *nierikate*, given that arrows and gourd bowls have drawings and end up being called *nierikate* as well. It can also be understood as 'the gift of seeing', alluding to the ritual visions that novices seek in order to create the world. Therefore, *nierika* refers at the same time to the instruments of seeing, such as mirrors and the *nierikate*, used to allow the true shape of the world to be revealed to the novice. With all these meanings, *nierika* is a '*mana* concept', which as such makes reference to the power of magic. It alludes to a multifaceted notion, which means everything and nothing at the same time, and whose specific complexity is the result of the ritual context's complexity. In the first place, it is not conceived to be understood, since it only makes sense through an analysis of the ritual process.

We can therefore see that the concept of image among the Maya, the Nahua, the Huichol, the pre-Hispanic Quechua and Aymara speakers in the Andes, or the modern Huni Kuin (Cashinahua) from Amazonia (and undoubtedly among other Amerindian peoples) is significantly similar and is based on the idea that there is an essence shared between the images and that what is represented, which turns them into presences under specific circumstances, such as rituals. And rather than translate these words, it is advisable to 'import' them into the vocabulary that deals with the study of visual cultures and, by extension, to the world's plural histories of 'art', in order to make a rich contribution to the corresponding disciplines.

The essays in this book

The essays collected in this volume show the results of the individual research of scholars whose work focuses on the Amerindian world's visual manifestations and aesthetic practices past and present. It is divided in four sections according to the main subjects and problems addressed by the authors. In order to maintain the diversity of perspectives and considerations, the essays were not grouped along chronological or geographic-cultural divisions. Therefore, as an example, the reader will find an essay pertaining to the urbanism of two Classic-period Maya cities and an essay about creative interventions in the urban space of contemporary Toronto in the same section. The reader will also find – to mention but two cases – historical reconstructions such as the one proposing that it was the Maya Poq'om who founded ancient Kaminal Juyu – thus called in error, according to the author – a hypothesis that has allowed recovery of the city's original name: Chiih Wits, 'Maguey Mountain', alongside the analyses of current situations, as is the case of Mazahua textiles from the community of San Cristóbal de los Baños, Mexico. At the same time, several studies bring together the results of their authors' personal field experiences. Although each of the essays – specifically and from the perspective of their own goals – deals with the general subject of 'Amerindian visuality', they all share the combination of certain principles stemming from different disciplines, which has allowed contributions of a theoretical-methodological nature.

The book's **first section**, called "Cosmologies and Visual Histories of Power: To Name and to Show", brings together four essays that explore productions both from the pre-Columbian past and from the period following the Conquest. All four address the subject of power in socio-cosmological terms and the ways to articulate them visually. These studies combine tools from different disciplines in order to address 'what is said' and 'what is seen'. In this sense, it is worth recalling Boehm's words (2014, 25) concerning the problems that revolve around the image, which he postulates in terms of 'saying' (here, 'naming') and 'showing', and states that – when confronted with the question "what is an image?" – one is faced with an evident discrepancy that oscillates between the interest formulated by saying ('verbal language') and a completely different interest, that of 'showing'.[8] In this context, one finds possible answers for the name of an ancient city in the modern State of Guatemala by bringing various types of sources – i.e. visual and verbal – into play; the 'reading' of a pyramid – which has come to us in a severely fragmented state – and its iconographic program in the Highlands of Central Mexico, by contrasting archaeological evidence with other material remains (for example, sculptures); the comparison of a pre-Hispanic codex with a book written/painted in New Spain, in search of a better understanding of the ancient image in its manner of alluding to ritual; or a painted wooden vessel that is the product of the encounter between the Old and New Worlds, by combining Andean socio-cosmological and Spanish/European socio-religious thoughts.

The article "Maguey Mountain: The Original Name of Kaminal Juyu" by **Ruud van Akkeren** posits that the original name of this pre-Hispanic city in Guatemala – a name assigned to the site by J. A. Villacorta in 1936, which sounds like a Kaqchikel word, with a meaning that appears to allude to a 'mound of the dead', i.e., a 'tomb' – was actually 'Maguey Mountain' or Chiih Wits, and that one of its ruling lineages, harking from Preclassic times, was that of Kaqkoj' or Puma. They took their name from the *nawal* of the Hill-Valley Lord, whom they considered to be their ancestral father. This essay stems from the ethno-historical book van Akkeren wrote about Kaminal Juyu, called *Cerro de Maguey, tierra donde nació el tiempo. Un estudio etnohistórico de Kaminal Juyu, capital del pueblo poq'om (Maguey Mountain, the land where time was born. An ethno-historical study of Kaminal Juyu, capital of the Poq'om* [in press]). One of the conclusions is that the founders of this ancient city were Maya Poq'om. The author developed the idea that the Poq'omam and the Poq'omchi' groups were both originally from the Valley of Guatemala,

8 The latter is closely linked with iconic-figurative representations (i.e., 'images'). What is more: the force of the figurative expression will be revealed as a 'force of showing'. Therefore, inquiries on the image always involve the difference between that which allows itself to be said and that which does not, but which is shown. Images have no mouth or voice, but they communicate in a distinct manner; the question is how. Here, it becomes important to emphasize that 'to show' does not represent a minor or 'reduced' capacity, but rather – in its own way – fulfills the three main features of language: to communicate, to represent and to have incidence; i.e., to have an effect. In fact, when working with certain images (and objects) belonging to distant times or to other 'distant' cultures, visual/material evidence becomes prevalent (and often the only one) (Boehm 2014, 25-26).

based on the fact that when the Spaniards arrived in this Valley, they found Poq'omam speakers there who, according to various indications, seem to have populated this area since ancient times. He comes to the conclusion that the Poq'om people built Kaminal Juyu, although it must be pointed out that the Xinca people – who are not Maya speakers – also took part in its foundation.

The essay "Invoking the Past to Mute the Present: Implications for the Epiclassic Feathered Serpent Pyramid at Xochicalco, Mexico" by **Debra Nagao** reexamines the iconic pyramid in this Epiclassic city (ca. 650-900 AD), located in the Highlands of Central Mexico, in two contexts: it confronts the archaeological evidence in regard to its placement within the city and its construction phases in connection with the city's sculptural tradition. Nagao endeavors to place this building within the site's chronology and to reappraise the possible meanings of its iconographic program. It would seem that many of the ideas regarding the monument's iconographic program were derived from Teotihuacan's early monuments, although the visual sources or stylistic solutions were extracted mostly from more or less contemporary sources in the Maya area, with the aim to reformulate and maybe even to somewhat conceal direct connections with said metropolitan center, much after it had stopped exercising its regional power and influence. Xochicalco's manifestations were not a rebirth of the greatness and power of Teotihuacan, but rather reveal two processes. The strategy chosen by the artists/architects of Xochicalco was resorting to systems of powerful symbols, presenting them in an innovative way, through the selective use of non-local visual styles, with an emphasis on a generalized 'Maya' style. The second component was the choice of Teotihuacan elements that already had their own resonance in the Maya area where, during the metropolis' heyday, Maya rulers adopted elements of Teotihuacan style and iconography in order to augment their authority. The Pyramid of the Feathered Serpent was planned and executed as a monument for promoting unity, grounded on undisputable cosmological time.

Alonso Rodrigo Zamora Corona's essay "*Tlaelcuani:* On the Possible Function of the '*In Extenso* Almanac' of the Codex Borgia", a section that covers the first eight pages of the codex, offers a new hypothesis on the opening section of this document: given its imagery and content, the Borgia's *in extenso* almanac (or *Tonalamatl*, i.e. '260-day ritual calendar' or 'count of days') displays elements in correspondence with the purification rituals described by Sahagún in books I and IV of the Florentine Codex. In said rituals, calendar specialists (*tlapouhqueh* or *tlamatinime*, ['those who read']) under the patronage of the deities Tezcatlipoca and Tlazolteotl listened to their patrons' transgressions and, by means of their divinatory books, assigned penitence and ritual actions to avoid bad fortune and punishment by the gods. The ritual prescriptions recounted in these descriptions, as well as the verbal images present in the prayer of a *tlapouhqui* for that very occasion, as transcribed by Sahagún in book VI of his opus, display interesting coincidences with the iconography of the Borgia's *in extenso* almanac. On the other hand, the author addresses the allegations of Christian influence or 'contamination' in said passages – which were compared to the idea of the Catholic

confession by the friars – and puts forward arguments that endorse such suggestions – in agreement with authors such as Alfredo López Austin – in the sense that the notion of ritual purity was of great importance to the Nahua. He concludes by stating that it is possible to conceive of the CodexBorgia's *in extenso* almanac and other divinatory books as having had the function of assigning auguries and penitence for the users of the *tlapouhqui* in the context of ritual purification practices associated with the calendar, rather than having been generically used for reading their fortunes.

Andrew D. Turner's article "Resistance, Persistence, and Incorporation: Andean Cosmology and European Imagery on a Colonial Inka *Kero*" explores the images and symbolism of a painted wooden *kero* (a type of cup). On the one hand, the *kero* shows a ceremonial battle scene; on the other, in a rather unique way, a 'life stairs' scene, taken from a European print. Although this kind of scene would appear to be in disagreement with Andean conceptions of aging and death, the scene was incorporated into the decoration of the vessel and modified for the purpose of transmitting the Andean symbolic content and the status of the *kero*'s owner. The owner of such receptacle was likely a *kuraka*, an indigenous nobleman who acted as an intermediary between Spanish colonists and Andean subjects. *Kurakas* would commission objects such as painted *keros* that were not the product of hybrid identities, but rather intentionally referred to as symbols of power and prestige, closely adhered to both Spanish and Andean traditions. The author underscores the fact that the search for 'authentic' cultural elements may still be at the center of research interested in the idea of hybridization. What is 'hybrid' does not conform to either what we consider to be European cultural standards, nor to indigenous ones, and their identification often depends on our own (i.e. Western European) conceptions about 'pure' cultural origins and on our recognition of pre-Hispanic elements. Therefore, it would be more productive to question why these objects deliberately and simultaneously refer to Andean traditional symbols of authority and to European markers of status, and to consider the way in which social actors used them with full awareness in order to negotiate power.

The **second section** called "Perceptions and Creative Interventions in Urban Spaces" is composed of by two essays that address questions of space, place, perceptions and creative 'native' interventions, and their possible effects on observers/users in different urban contexts – one touches on the pre-Columbian past, the other on modern times. Through an analysis of the 'pure form' of the architectural remains in two Maya cities, which are integrated into and transform the natural environment, the first essay posits that buildings and their placement are 'capable' of guiding people along intentional routes, thus adding signification to these spaces. The second essay puts forward questions such as: How has public art facilitated and questioned the illusion of territorial 'discovery'? What role can the narration of indigenous stories and contemporary artistic practices play in disrupting the 'official' language perpetuating colonialist practices?

Arianna Campiani's essay under the title "The Built Environment and its Communicative Capacity: the Maya Cities of Chinikiha and Palenque in the Late Classic" studies

these two sites, which during the Late Classic period (ca. 600-909 AD) attained the urban shapes we see nowadays. The author – who has taken part in archaeological excavations at both sites and follows the analysis postulated by the architect Kevin Lynch (1960) – advances that many of the physical features of these cities, which point to the intentional planning of specific spaces and places, can still be recognized and comprehensively analyzed in order to understand how both settlements functioned. Although these two cities have not been fully excavated, their remains bring us closer to the understanding of their inhabitants' usage patterns in certain generic aspects, such as mobility, accessibility and permeability, among others. Similarly, the study of urban morphology – which takes advantage of the terrain's topography – indicates that the built environment has the capacity to guide users through the landscape. Campiani is aware of the impossibility of taking into account those sensations that cannot be experienced through the sense of sight – e.g. the sound of the rivers of Palenque – and fundamentally develops visual research of the built and natural environments to review the impact it may have had on those who lived in or visited it. It is important to underscore that not all people who lived and walked through these cities would have perceived the built environment's messages in the same way, or that they would have shared them.

Julie Nagam's article "Disrupting Toronto's Urban Space through the Creative (In)terventions of Robert Houle" places the artist Robert Houle (1947) within the frame of native space, by means of analyzing four of Houle's projects from 1997. Nagam argues that Houle's work confronts the mythologies of settlers in terms of the occupation of space and defies these constructions by bringing counter-models of indigenous space into public discourse, articulating them through indigenous stories of place. Houle's re-mapping of the city of Toronto is based on indigenous ideas of geography, history and knowledge, in forms that supplement the notion of indigenous space as a network of relationships similar to those traditionally navigated over waterways and across land. Bringing these connections to the forefront challenges the grid system constructed by settler culture that overwrites Indigenous mappings of the cityscape. The dialog these works create seeks to dismantle the colonizer/colonized binary opposition in favor of a transformational reading of space that allows people to interact with these works without playing the traditional colonial roles, thus allowing spectators/passersby to explore the indigenous stories of the place. Nagam also studies the Anishinaabe map of the cosmos implicit in Houle's work. This cosmological structure allows focusing on the power of naming and the capacity to create indigenous self-histories, anchored in indigenous space. The research is based on the principle that art can create the epistemological, critical and phenomenological conditions necessary to critically analyze and defy the officially constructed linear histories through stories of place and the establishment of a direct dialog with the archaeology and geography of space.

The **third section** under the name "(Re)presentations of the Invisible: The Status of Images" is composed of five essays that underscore the connection between art/image

and ritual, which in the academic world took place after Aby Warburg – art historian and founding father of Image Science – encountered the Amerindian universe and American anthropology during his journey in the land of the Hopi. In this intersection we can also find the impact of the ontological turn coming from anthropological studies and the possible analogies between visual/material culture (from different times and peoples), as well as the ontological principles described in the ethnographic framework. The status of 'representation' or 'presentification'[9] is not inherent to the (plastic) image, but rather depends on its role and function in the contexts of its circulation/usage. That is, it submits to whatever men do with images and to whatever images do with men. In this sense, an image becomes 'presentification' – i.e. a being with a 'social agency' that is specifically linked with the maintenance of cosmic order – inasmuch as having a capacity to 'cause events' that affect the lives of those who interact with it. The attribution of agency implies also the attribution of interiority, an awareness from which an intentionality emerges. The essays address this subject in connection with diverse materials from Amerindian cultures, both archaeological and modern.

In her essay "Amerindian Cosmographies: Art and the 'Act of Animation'", **Marcia Arcuri** argues that studies which focus on the analysis of visual semantics and iconographic structures shown in Amerindian artifact assemblages have always met with some resistance in academic debates. As she purports to show, the 'continuous act' that operates on beings and 'carries life' – defined as an act of animation or *camay* – is the essence of relational ontologies for Andean peoples. The multiple interactions between the subjects from terrestrial-natural-present spheres with beings from other worlds/spheres take place through the practice of intermediary agents, ritual practices or 'continuous acts' of socio-cosmic reproduction. In turn, the archaeological bias posited in this essay's discussion returns to the record's materiality and the interpretational limitations it imposes, especially while researching contexts from the remote past, where endless unknowns prevail. Arcuri supports the perspective of studying the stylistic patterns in the archaeological record both from a technological and a symbolic standpoint as a way to understand the dynamics of materialization, consumption and reproduction of ontological principles. When comparing material records that synthesize notions of Amerindian ritual cosmography, she seeks to demonstrate that the analysis of visual semantics presupposes the idea of motility in art, in convergence with the notion of agency in objects and not the other way around. The author considers that the interaction of actors/forces characteristic for different ecological zones, temporary spheres and cosmic planes constituted the principle of the well-known 'Andean cross' (*chakana* in Quechua). The quadripartite scheme synthesized in the *chakana* is present in Moche and Lambayeque, Huari, Chancay, Chimu and Inca iconographies.

9 See note 6.

In "Representations and 'Presentifications': Functions of Plastic Images in the Pre-Hispanic Andean World", **María Alba Bovisio** examines the status acquired by Andean plastic images that circulate in cult and ritual contexts, either as 'representation' or as 'presentification'. An analysis of ethnohistorical sources allows for the reconstruction of the concepts of *waka* and *unancha* which, on the one side, account for the existence of plastic images that had the character of sacred presences and, on the other, for those that operated as representations, i.e. signs that stand instead of the referent to which allusion is being made. In light of these concepts, Bovisio analyzes the lithic sculpture of Chavín de Huántar, Northern Peruvian Mountain Range (ca. 1200-500 BC), taking into account the differentiated roles that the images fulfilled pursuant to their functioning in specific contexts. Notably, the author studies a sector of the ceremonial center identified as 'atrium and gallery of the Lanzón' (the large sculpture of the Lanzón could have embodied a deity/ancestor). Taking the site's features as a starting point, she proposes a reconstruction of the functioning context of the Lanzón image and of the engraved flagstones of the round atrium, in connection with the concepts of *waka* and *unancha*. The concept of *waka* is key to investigating pre-Columbian Andean cosmovision. It is a complex and versatile notion, which alludes to every sacred entity, both natural (mountains, springs, lakes, animals, constellations) and 'artificial' (temples, tombs, funerary bundles, figurines, etc.). Thus, a series of manmade objects exists, made of various materials and fulfilling different functions, which are *waka* in character, inasmuch as they function as 'presentifications'. This concept is different from that of *unancha* which, according to Bovisio, expresses the concept of representation.

In the essay "Antagonistic Identification: Chimerical Beings and Relational Complexity in Ritual Art of the Mississippian Tradition", **Johannes Neurath** offers a new interpretation of the art of the Southeast Ceremonial Complex of the Mississippi river basin in the centuries immediately preceding the initial contacts with the Spaniards. Neurath posits that the complex and chimerical figures of this art must be understood as condensed expressions of contradictory relations, experienced in ritual contexts where depredation relations coexist with the celebration of alliances with beings from the alterity, and where an ambiguity in the relations between people and these beings always prevails. To interpret the iconography of this Complex, the most regrettable fact is that there are very few documents regarding Caddo chiefdoms, which in pre-Columbian times built sites as important as Spiro and after the Spanish colonization controlled a large part of the territory that currently makes up the States of Texas, Oklahoma and Arkansas. Nonetheless, it is possible to find elements of ritual complexity that can be linked to what can be seen in the iconography of the Southeast Ceremonial Complex. Pawnee human sacrifice to the Venus deities, for example, is among the most remarkable examples. Precisely because of this rite, the Pawnee have been also linked to ancient Mexicans, at least by those authors who believed in the possibility of Mesoamerican influence reaching all the way into regions that are so far removed; the existence of a 'Tlacaxipehualiztli complex' was even posited, which mainly consisted of sacrifice

through arrow-shooting and ritual flaying, and which would have extended from the North American prairies, down along the coast of the Gulf of Mexico and reaching into parts of Northern South America. This essay focuses on the ritual complexity and visionary art produced in the Mississippian tradition.

In the article "Figuration of the Invisible in Warburg and in Indigenous Amazonian Arts", **Els Lagrou** reflects upon the interpretation and agency of the image in Amerindian life and thought, taking an intellectual encounter as a starting point: that of Aby Warburg with the Amerindian universe during his journey to the land of the Hopi. The Hopi minimalistic and chimeric representation of the snake-lightning, in combination with its ritual manipulation, gave Warburg his key insight for thinking about the image in terms of a sign-concept. Warburg was interested in the psychology of perception and of the image, and it is this aspect of his thinking that would be reclaimed by image theorists like Freedberg (1989), Severi (2008; 2009; 2018) and Didi-Huberman (1997). Warburg's rediscovery for art historians means that, in a certain way, the image has never ceased to be a double, in spite of all our Platonic heritage and the new Neo-Platonic religious iconoclasms. The second encounter is that between the Hopi and the Huni Kuin (Cashinahua), taking Warburg's reading as a starting point and in a close dialogue with the concept of chimera posited by Severi. The serpent is a key figure, for both indigenous communities and for many other Amazonian groups. From this connection, Lagrou explores some concepts that are fundamental for the anthropology of art: abstraction, figuration and the notion of double (beings) or of images and their respective relations of transformation one into the other. This essay is part of a series of comparative efforts that the author has undertaken in connection with Amazonian shamanistic ontologies and their specific relation with images and objects. Among them, she found a trilogy of concepts for thinking about the image – *kene*, *dami*, *yuxin* – which she translates as graphism, figuration and spirit, respectively.

In the essay "Vision and Creation of Images among the Southern Tepehuanos", **Antonio Reyes** describes the way in which, for the Tepehuanos from South Durango, Mexico, the true ability to see is acquired through shamanistic initiation. True vision gives access to the world of the ancestors; in order to attain it, individuals must undergo long and elaborate periods of abstinence. During this time novices emulate the ancestors who, through fasting, are able to transform into deities and thus seek to interact with them. As part of this process novices learn to (re)produce ceremonial objects that simultaneously personify ancestors, the spirits of the dead and the very individual who fashions these objects. These objects, as well as the sculptures of Christian saints in churches, obtain agency and cease to be innocuous objects through the ritual work that endows the novices with the power to 'see', equating this ability with the very attributes of the gods. To the O'dam, 'knowing how to see' is an acquired ability that transcends the material world of human beings. Most important is gaining access to the images that are evident to us. This is an ability acquired through a long process during lifetime involving ceremonial abstinences in contexts of shamanic initiation that bring humans

close to the realm of deities and the spirits of the dead, and is also an ability that every O'dam should develop during their life. The *xidhuukam* condition, or rather its process, establishes a relation between 'what exists', between the O'dam, the gods and the corresponding epistemological process.

The **fourth section**, "The Encounters of Past and Present: Mobile Memories" includes four essays dealing with appropriations, transformations and inventions of memory in its visual (and textual) productions, connecting the (remote) past with the present, but always creating new manifestations (and practices) – which are the product of the new realities and identities, as well as reactions to them – and never mere copies. Thus, modern textile designs from the Jalq'a area of Bolivia link rock art imagery from the remote past with modern-day textiles, both being considered to be infernal; here we can witness the survival and re-signification of an old motif, which has endured in indigenous memory. The second essay approaches the various traditional Mazahua attires which, on the one hand, combine and integrate elements from current Otomi culture in novel ways and, on the other, hint at clues of an original pre-Hispanic culture. In the third contribution, the history of the Conquest as narrated in book XII of the Florentine Codex – by means of texts and images – vindicates a 'new' memory, the result of the collision between two worlds, and raises questions concerning what is authentically indigenous in the documents written by members of conquered ethnic groups from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; whether writing in a native language gives the author the status of an indigenous person; or whether friars and members of indigenous groups remained in culturally opposed extremes. The last article deals with the problems raised by the use of pre-Hispanic (Mexican and Peruvian) arts in the production of (European) decorative arts, which is the result of both the impetus given by scientists and the Western artistic environment and the policies in favor of indigenous peoples in Mexico and Peru; this 'transformation of gaze' modifies artistic exchanges and redraws the geopolitical map of the first half of the twentieth century.

Verónica Cereceda's essay "Ancient Rock Paintings and Ethnic Designs in Modern Textiles in the Jalq'a Region" explores the direct relations between textiles and pictographs, with an emphasis between specific woven patterns and figures painted or carved on rock ('rock art'). These relations have been 'woven' since pre-Columbian times until today. The author posits that the same semantic universe brings together textile designs, old pictographs and a modern ethnicity that evokes what is deep and infernal in Andean thought as its identity. Today's indigenous populations consider rock paintings of varying antiquity as images of the world's inner and deep parts left by ancestors, where their forces continue to exist. It was precisely there where Christianization placed hell, and so caves, rock shelters and great stone formations with petroglyphs on them today belong to the demonic sphere. Beginning in the 1990s, the textile designs of Jalq'a communities from Central South Bolivia have carried out a process of representing this inner world. Certain features of the old paintings to be found at those sites, that are thought of as sacred, have partly been the inspiration for woven images that appear on some clothing.

In the present, the image has walked an inverted path – from rock to threads – a recovery of proposals across media. We find ourselves in the presence of a living process using a figure and plastic languages from the past as memory for contemporary conceptions of what might be called a *supay wasi*, a specific home for the demons in these communities.

In the article "Learning to Read the Mazahua Textile Diversity: The Case of the Traditional Garments from San Cristóbal de los Baños, Ixtlahuaca", **Bianca Castillero** addresses the heterogeneity of traditional attire in the Mexican territory known as Mazahua – where she carried out her field research – by means of a detailed description of the elements that constitute the visual language of the fabric that gives them structure. Castillero intent is not only to acknowledge the dialogue established between the formal elements of the pieces, which do not allow for explanatory interpretations, but rather by themselves become productive models of textile messages. This premise is exemplified through the garments from San Cristóbal de los Baños, a variant of the Mazahua/Otomi dress, showing how its components are articulated and generate complex discourses that create their own reflection, distinct from the two cultures from which it was created. The author concludes that Mazahua everyday life is nurtured and modified day by day, since it is not a static culture, but rather a society in constant transformation, which creates new everyday experiences in each of its cultural products. That is, we are in the presence of a contemporary indigenous community that articulates itself with regional, national and even world systems.

In the essay "Image as Indigenous Memory: Uses of the Past in Indigenous Christian Art", **José Luis Pérez Flores** analyzes some historiographical trends regarding the treatment of the indigenous memory of the Conquest and shows how, beginning in the second half of the twentieth century, several researchers have strived to analyze indigenous sources, trying to overcome inherent methodological difficulties, above all knowing that for several decades historians devoted to this subject have hesitated to use these sources, considering cultural distances to be insurmountable. Using a selection of images from the book XII of the Florentine Codex as a starting point, Pérez Flores maintains that the Christianization of indigenous peoples should not be considered to be an element that invalidates indigenous memory, but rather makes it necessary to incorporate it as a cultural dimension that enables us to understand native efforts to explain the transformation of the pre-Hispanic order brought on by the arrival of the Spaniards and Christianity. The adaptation of native arts to the needs of Christianity and the teaching of these arts in different establishments contributed to their preservation and transformation, giving rise to an art that we may call 'Indigenous Christian', executed under supervision of the friars, who acted as mentors but also as censors of indigenous production. The author posits the hypothesis that in several cases the acceptance of Christianity and of the discourse imposed by the vanquishers are part of a strategy of resistance, which was implemented as a measure intended to avoid severe punishments. It also served as a means to adapt to the rules imposed by the Spaniards and from them to build a new identity, which was absolutely crucial in the face of the crisis brought on by the Conquest and the subsequent dismantling of the old native institutions.

Élodie Vaudry's essay "Two Books with Pre-Hispanic Motifs in Mexico and Peru: from an Artistic to a Political Role" deals with two compilations of indigenous and pre-Hispanic ornaments, specifically Elena Izcue's (Peru) *El arte peruano en la escuela* and Adolfo Best Maugard's (Mexico) *Método de dibujo*, viewed as compilations that richly contribute to research on Indigeneity. Both artists – chosen by the governments of their respective countries – instrumented the pre-Hispanic past for schools, for art, for crafts and for political use in their works. These mediators of past and present (Mexican and Peruvian) through drawing are also intermediary figures between Latin American and European reserves, having been inspired by those pre-Hispanic objects that the Old World had chosen to feed its research on Latin America. When these works cross the borders of Mexico and Peru, they become tools of national representation on the international scene, establishing a broad policy in favor of the indigenous, based on the integration of the pre-Hispanic past and the indigenous populations through education and the arts. While these two governments use fine arts for political purposes, they also instrument the decorative arts of their respective countries in order to unite art and life and, above all, to favor the idea of a national social 'harmony'. Thus, these works at the same time legitimize the present in its future projection, to the extent that they understand it in relation to a past that is no longer perceived as a multiplicity of references or dispersed temporalities, but as a dynamic process of the present and its becoming. The pre-Hispanic motifs represent one of the languages that allow the writing of the identity of these two countries, while for European decorators it is a catalogue of non-Western forms to be used in the renewal of artistic creation.

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